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AI in the county page 2 Home and Cottage Show page 9 Flower power page 14

Things are looking up
Camp Medeba is continuing to host their weekly climb nights on Sunday evenings, for anyone interested in trying out the sport. Pictured, a young climber plans his route up the wall. /TIM YANO staff photographer

A breath of fresh air in Gooderham

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

In the heart of Gooderham, there lies a piece of Haliburton County history.

Barr's General Store was opened when Peter Barr moved from Irondale to Gooderham to start the shop in the late 1800s. The store formed a community around it, with the hamlet becoming a hustling and bustling destination, servicing the Irondale River, Monck Road, Buckhorn Road, and the IB&O Railway.

Located at 1023 Gooderham Street, the shop has evolved and changed over the years, but in its booming days, carried "a little bit of everything," according to Amber MacDuff, the new tenant of the historic space.

MacDuff has called Gooderham 'home' her entire life. She recalls the building being a staple in the community for as long as she can remember, and pinches herself that she's created a world inside it.

And not just any world. An entirely miniature world, meticulously built and crafted with the next generation in mind. "Everything here is designed for little people," said MacDuff, the director and founder of Highlands Childcare. "Kids need a place to just be kids."

MacDuff has a background in nursing and personal support work. She has supported individuals of all ages and stages in their lives, and has dedicated her life to helping others.

But when she started to grow her family, the strains of shift work became apparent, and the lack of childcare in the county began to weigh on her day-to-day. "It's a huge grey area in our community," said MacDuff. "Especially in a county this size, where you have to drive everywhere for work."

Before long, the wheels started to turn for MacDuff to open her own childcare facility in the heart of Gooderham. With a Pinterest board loaded with ideas and a husband highly skilled in the trades, MacDuff was able to execute her dream into a reality.

Pulling from her background of support work, MacDuff knew what would be needed to create a desirable destination for young minds. "This project is deeply personal," she said, "and deeply rooted in giving back." With a miniature village crafted, including a restaurant, an ice cream parlour, and even a tiny Barr's General Store, the facility is loaded with toys, books, and games, specifically designed for open-ended, imaginative play.

MacDuff has hired a full staff to operate the facility, which can accommodate 24 pre-schoolers, and up to four toddlers. With her goal to become fully licensed in the coming weeks, MacDuff hopes to open her doors by next month.

And once she opens, she intends to be fully available. With hours from 7:15 a.m. to 6 p.m., MacDuff hopes to offer parents the opportunity to have enough time to drive to and from work, without leaving early to accommodate pick-ups. "There's been a lot of interest for sure," she said. "The community is entirely behind

see CHILDCARE page 13

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Gull River housing project opening doors in 2027

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

Anyone who has driven between Minden and Haliburton recently would have seen the towering builds on the intersection of Highways 35 and 21, and Michelle Corley, the human services manager for the City of Kawartha Lakes, came to County council last week to provide an update on the site.

"It's an exciting build," opened Corley, "and it's a beautiful site, and it's really coming along."

A long time coming, the affordable housing initiative started in 2019. This project originally resulted from a private land owner seeking a partnership to bring an accessible housing opportunity to fruition; currently referred to as the Gull River housing development.

Between 2020 and 2022, three separate attempts were made to seek funding from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Rapid Housing Initiative. All three funding applications were unsuccessful. Aside from the challenges in raising funding to support the project, significant time and delay was also spent in navigating traffic setback requirements by the Ministry of Transportation, according to the report brought forward during the May 14 council meeting.

The build is comprised of 35 one and two bedroom units, with all units meeting a general level of accessibility. A number of the units have received individual funding contributions, but the total capital cost of the build is approximately $11,367,747.15, noted Corley.

From the original proposal, out of the 35 units, 10 were designated as "deeply affordable units," according to Corley. Yet due to offset costs and community support, the developers are able to offer 19 units for the income bracket. "We know there are several hundred individuals waiting for a deeply affordable unit in the county of Haliburton," said Corley. "Increasingly, in that mix levels of affordability in that project, seven units are going to be targeted as our new affordable rental rate, and they'll be targeted to individuals who have incomes between 40th and 60th income percentile." She also noted nine units at a market rental rate will be available.

Corley confirmed that first occupancy is set for January, 2027. While some units may be available prior to the date, the location will likely be an active construction site until the new year. She also noted that there are no rent supplements included in the 2026 budget.

Concern arose around the council table then Corley was unable to confirm who would be residing in the units, noting that those in need are pulled from lists generated by Kawartha Lakes Haliburton (KLH) Housing Corporation, meaning that they cannot guarantee that the Haliburton County units would be saved for local residents. "We can't designate specifically. Our various legislation mandating our waiting lists doesn't allow us, nor does the human rights code," said Corley. "But, I can tell you, last time we looked at the waiting list for the Gull River Project for the deeply affordable list, 75 per cent of the folks waiting were from either the City of Kawartha Lakes or the County of Haliburton."

> ***"We know there are several hundred individuals waiting for a deeply affordable unit in the county of Haliburton ..."***
>
> — Michelle Corley, City of Kawartha Lakes

"Maybe I'm being selfish," said Walt McKechnie, the deputy mayor for Dysart. "I just think there's enough people in Haliburton County that could fill it."

According to the report brought to council, the county's annual rent supplement contribution is estimated to be $74,000 for the first full year of occupancy in 2027. This represents an increase from the previously-approved $72,000, and will enable 19 units to be offered as deeply affordable with rents geared-to-income - an increase of nine units for an additional investment of $2,000.

Council received the report as information, and approved the incremental increase to the annual rent supplement contribution.

A new world; navigating AI in municipalities

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

It's official, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is making its way to our local council tables.

During last week's regular meeting of county council, director of IT Michael March brought forward a report on responsible AI use framework. He noted that broader regulations are in process from the provincial government, but in the meantime, Eastern Ontario IT Collaborative (EOITC) have joined together to discuss the programs at a local level.

"We saw this as a shared challenge," said March. "The group of us worked together with a third party and we produced the AI use framework that was provided to you today."

Artificial Intelligence technologies, including generative AI tools, are increasingly being adopted across public and private sector organizations, reads March's report to council. The director of IT noted that these tools have the potential to improve productivity, streamline administrative work, support data analysis, and assist staff in managing increasing service demands.

But at the same time, according to March, AI introduces risks related to privacy, confidentiality, accuracy, transparency, bias, cybersecurity, records management, and public trust. For municipalities, these risks are especially important given the nature of public sector decision-making, and the sensitivity of information managed by local governments.

March referred to the proposed framework as "a practical plan" to implement ethical and risk-aware usage for AI within the county. A formal AI policy is in the works at all tiers of local government, that would extend to educate the public in the process.

With the plan in place, the county IT department has developed AI literacy training, which has been circulated amongst staff, and will continue to evolve and develop as the new technology plays a role in day-to-day.

Councillor Murray Fearrey, the mayor of Dysart, noted that other countries are putting regulations in place to ensure AI is not removing jobs from people. "In some places already in Ontario, [AI] has put ten people out of work," he said. "So I think it's a serious issue and it's going to have implications, maybe not in a municipal sector, but certainly in the private sector."

CAO Gary Dyke responded to Fearrey. "Those types of things are what we're working on, and finding our way through the world of AI as we integrate it into our operations like everybody else," he said.

"It's a scary world we're entering into," said deputy warden Liz Danielsen.

"I see AI as something we can actively buy into as a tool," said Councillor Jennifer Dailloux, "or not. But there's also the sort of AI that happens to us." The deputy mayor for Algonquin Highlands was referencing the software that is naturally being installed on regular programs, often without the consent of the user.

"AI is getting baked into all the normal tools we use," agreed March. "It's the buzzword, it's the big thing in technology right now."

March noted that the programming and regulations will be an evolution, with the changes rolling out faster than they have before. "It'll be a challenge," he said.

The report was received as information, with the framework accepted as a document used for responsible AI usage at all levels of local government.

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Healthy turn-out at Voices and Votes speaker series

IVY KATZ
Journalist

Emotions are high as we head into election time, and last week's Voices and Votes speaker series proved that. The final session in the four-part series run by the Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project had a good turn-out at Stanhope's Community Fire Hall last Monday, May 11. The inspiring presentation was lead by Lauren Hunter, member of the steering committee, with an excellent rhythm that shared everything one needs to know about campaigning if they wish to run for council.

Nominations to run for municipal office opened on May 1, and according to Hunter, as of Monday, three people had already filed their paperwork with the municipal office to run for mayor. A few others had filed for other positions.

The facts in Hunter's speech were encouraging. For example, low-turnout, from a campaign perspective, for someone running means the candidate can think about how to get voters to vote for them, as opposed to focusing on swaying voters by competing directly against the opposing candidates. Low voter turnout means there are many people who are not voting and as a candidate running for office, this affords a great opportunity to get people involved by voting for them.

Hunter went on to say that although she is not a fan of lawn signage, statistics show that lawn signs do work, but candidates should ensure their name is the largest wording on the sign. Lawn signs can be costly and there are many bylaws to adhere to when placing them, but it is worth the effort. Studying by-laws is something a candidate will be doing if they are in office, so that is one opportunity to start early.

Hunter also pointed out that many people who make it to office did not make it on their first attempt at running. Hunter advises to view success not just as an ultimate win, but to look at everything in between. "Sometimes the cards are stacked against you," she explained. "It can take more than one campaign before you win." She suggests people do their homework, and take the time to examine core and pressing issues in the community by reading their local newspapers, joining Facebook groups, and spending time on the Association of Municipalities of Ontario website at amo.on.ca.

It was a full house at last week's Voice and Votes Speaker series, where Lauren Hunter spoke to the crowd regarding strategies and insight when it comes to running for local government. Many attendees voiced their interest in running for local positions of council. Nominations opened May 1 for the 2026 municipal election. /IVY KATZ staff

Door-to-door knocking might be the most powerful way to reach people, Hunter noted. Used frequently in provincial and federal elections, the seasoned political campaigner says it is under-used in municipal elections. Although it is time consuming, nothing compares to hearing community concerns first-hand. She advises: make sure to get voters' contact info; it is important to be able to reach back to voters to make sure they vote. "Voting is not always a logistical thing, it can also be an emotional thing. How you make people feel will often be why they vote for you," she said. "Choose tactics that work with people. Make a website, go on social media, but use social media very thoughtfully," Hunter emphasized. Setting solid boundaries and managing expectations early in the campaign is important.

Legal elements that are needed to qualify for municipal office include being a Canadian citizen and one must either live in or be a homeowner in the municipality they are running in. Hunter emphasized, for those interested in running, they should not worry about their resume. "It is not about what you have done but more about who you are," she told the audience. "People want to know who you are and why you are running. Be authentic; people can smell fake a mile away."

With that in mind, one must have 25 signatures when they file their paperwork, but it's a good idea to get a few more, in case someone did not fill in all the fields correctly, said Hunter. "The signatures are more like an endorsement, showing that your community knows who you are and stands behind your decision to run for office." The role of School Board Trustee is the only role in office which does not require any signatures to be submitted with the paperwork. To ensure the municipal office has time to process your paperwork, Hunter advised to make an appointment before showing up.

Furthermore, the clerk can help answer questions as they relate to running a "clear and above-board campaign." There are many financial rules that must be adhered to, she told the audience, such as opening a new bank account for one's campaign monies, keeping diligent records of all funds coming in and out, and holding onto those records until 2030. There is a maximum spending limit; that amount is revealed to the candidate only when their paperwork is handed in at the municipal office, but Hunter emphasizes that "it is not always the person who spends the most money that wins."

Making sure one is informed about the rules as they pertain to record keeping and running is highly important, and transparency is key. There are maximum limits allowed on contributions to campaigns, such as $12,000 per person. Candidates and their spouses can contribute to their own campaign, but those amounts differ as well. Bribery is not allowed. There are rules and limits attached to volunteer labour as well. For example, if a candidate knows a graphic designer and they volunteer their services towards the campaign. Hunter recommends people access government resources to get informed, such as the 2026 Candidates' Guide and the Ontario Provincial Guide, contact Elections Ontario with questions. Once they are a candidate, they can utilize the clerk's office as well, when they have questions.

"Generally, everyone says they vote, but the numbers tell us a different story, it is important to get people to actually vote for you," said Hunter. "You can be really popular but if people are not voting for you, move on to the next person. There are thousands of people out there who did not vote in the last election." With that in mind, Hunter relayed with a laugh that at one time, she had gone as far as to shovel gravel for someone who said they needed to get the driveway done before they could vote.

Following up and actually getting people to the polls is key to winning. Studies show the trend for casting ballots in the early polls has been on the rise. Gently nudge people towards voting, said Hunter. Eligible voters can vote early this year between October 16 and Election day. Contact the municipality for more information.

A lot of information was shared, but it was all made more accessible by Hunter's presentation. For those who were unable to attend, a video of Monday's presentation and additional resources can be found at www.hhhdp.ca/resources.

What is the best advice? According to Hunter, "whether you are considering running or choose to get involved by encouraging or mentoring someone you know, it is helpful to remember that change can happen - even in a small community." Spread the word about getting involved and go for it if interested.

Nominations close August 21, 2026 at 2 p.m. sharp. Election Day is Monday October 26, 2026.

Two turtles sunning by Jill Moulton

Fisher by Tammy Nash

West Guilford Bridge ready for repair

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

The next steps are being taken for the rehabilitation of the West Guilford Bridge. During a regular meeting of County council on May 13, director of public works, Sylvin Cloutier, confirmed that nine bids were received for the project, with the tendering process closing on April 30.

Cloutier confirmed that the rehabilitation is necessary to keep the roadways open. "The project will keep the West Guilford bridge in a good state of repair," he said in his report to council, noting that staff are recommending accepting the lowest bid price that is under budget, and meets all requirements.

The bridge resides on County Road 7, more commonly known as Kennisis Lake Road, and is located approximately 300 metres north of Highway 118. Within the 2026 public works department work and asset management plan, the bridge was identified as a priority.

"This rehabilitation will extend the service life by approximately 40 years," confirmed Cloutier. "This postpones the need for complete replacement, which is typically more costly and disruptive."

With a budget of $800,000, Cloutier made the recommendation to council to proceed with a bid from KB Civil Constructors Inc., which came in at $638,775.77, including nonrecoverable tax. Staff are recommending the bid price savings of $161,224.23 be used to cover design cost for the County Road 9 (McGillvray Road) culvert replacement, estimated to be $50,000.

Council approved the recommendation to enter into an agreement with KB Civil Constructors Inc.

STRs remain a contentious issue in Highlands East

IVY KATZ

Journalist

Short term rentals (STRs) are continuing to be a hot topic at the Highlands East Council table. During a regular meeting of council on Tuesday, May 12, staff shared that they have been focusing on processing licenses renewals, revenue reporting, and approving new licenses ahead of the summer season. Public education initiatives related to STR licensing and will continue to do so throughout 2026.

A short term rental public survey conducted between March 5 to April 2, 2026 noted key findings from the 135 responses received, where over 67 respondents were not STR license holders, while 26.7 per cent identified as STR license holders. Among the non-license holders, the largest respondent group of non-license holders were neighbours.

The recently launched STR dashboard emerged as the most contentious component of the program, with 58.5 per cent of respondents expressing opposition. STR owners expressed a preference for the introduction of Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) payment options for accommodation tax, and remittances for processing fees. Respondents also recommended reviewing and potentially aligning insurances with neighbouring municipalities.

During the council meeting, it was noted that staff have been actively reviewing internal program processes with a goal of reducing administrative burdens for staff and STR hosts. As part of this approach, neighbouring communities have been consulted to compare strategies, and look at best practices that could be adapted and implemented locally, according to the staff report.

Staff noted that encroachment agreements are based on the understanding that it is not the homeowners land, it is the municipalities land, therefore insurance is a protection for the municipality, and it was recommended with the original bylaw, they proceed with those insurance requirements, which are the same as Dysart and Minden Hills, according to council.

STR licensing clerk and enforcement officer Stacey Brown shared that she has noticed inefficiencies in her short time with the township, and has tried to deal with third-party payment system Granicus regarding the challenges. Council is looking at other ways to accept payments; Granicus only uses Stripe payment portal.

STR Operators were keen to find out where their taxpayer dollars are going in regards to the newly implemented Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT).

While council has yet to direct where the monies are going, the community was reminded that 50 per cent of the taxes received will go towards County tourism initiatives, and the remaining 50 per cent is allocated towards township-specific initiatives.

Council acknowledged that it takes time to fix these programs; constantly maneuvering brings its own challenges, and the program is still in its infancy. Mayor Dave Burton requested that staff look further into the bylaw.

In regard to the American payment company Granicus, council questioned whether staff should look elsewhere for payment programming. Council reminded the STR operators to know they are heard, and are working on streamlining the inefficiencies. Council accepted as information, and directed staff to continue research on the best process for STR providers.

Council resolved to further direct staff to provide revisions to the bylaw for council considerations, with the promise of the report returning to the next regular meeting of Highlands East council.

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Looking back while looking ahead with the Dollos

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

The original Dollo Brothers Food Market in the heart of downtown Minden. Started by Peter and Joseph Dollo when they returned from World War II, the iconic community destination has been in the family for four generations. /FILE

On a rainy Wednesday afternoon, longtime friends John Davis and David Dollo took a phone call with our newspaper.

They sat together on speakerphone, the pitter patter of rain drops echoing on the call.

And with that background, they took me on a trip through time.

John had contacted me earlier in the month. He wanted to get a milestone on my radar. A major anniversary celebration for the Dollo family in Minden. 70 years in business, and a pillar in the community as a whole.

So together, through that rainy day phone call, we went back in time. We travelled right back to 1946, when David's father, Peter, and uncle Joseph first returned from World War II.

"They were given an allowance," said David, "to buy clothes, right from the war. They had to do something. Life started again."

And they used that allowance to buy a truck.

That truck was used to transport food, back and forth, all throughout Minden. "It was a summer business," said David, "stocking up the lodges along Highway 35. You had to do what you had to do."

Slowly but surely, the Dollo Brothers business began to grow. By 1956, the brothers received a franchise for an IGA store, which is the anniversary celebrated this coming June. The IGA Food Market was opened on the west side of Bobcaygeon Road, next to the present day Stedman's.

David recalls working Sundays as a child in the shop. "I don't think we could afford a lot of staffing," he said, "so that was what we had to do."

But a Christmas Eve fire changed the plans for the little location. David recalled being alerted of the fire later in the evening, after church. "I was a teenager, so I ran down faster than most," he said. While the fire took place in Stedman's, there was significant damage done to the walls and roof of Dollo's from excessive water and smoke.

But the Dollos stuck with their business. By 1975, David became a partner in the organization, alongside his father and uncle. By that time, they had moved "up around the corner" of the original downtown shop, but the new location presented some challenges. "The floor kept sinking," recalled David. "We had a lot of problems there."

In 1982, the business moved from downtown onto the bypass, where it currently resides. "It was a challenge to do that because we were separating from the downtown," said David. "But the property downtown wasn't suitable, and we didn't have much say in that. But we had to cut the ties with downtown, but it was a hard thing to do."

But it proved the right thing to do. The store continued to grow and evolve with the community, while maintaining their small-town values over the years.

Meanwhile, John Davis was navigating his way through the ranks of the business. The longtime Minden local started with the store in 1966, and worked his way to becoming the meat manager. The shop was where he met his wife, his longtime friends, and a number of customers and locals who would shape his life. "It really has a family feel to it," recalled Davis, as he chatted on the phone, sitting alongside David Dollo on that rainy afternoon. "It really has a family feel to it. You weren't just a grocery store. You were a family."

And it's not just the happenings within the store that made for a community, it was their contributions beyond their four walls. "Often we celebrate sports teams and events," said John, "but no one talks about the businesses. They're what make our community."

Jack Brezina, former publisher, editor, and writer of the *Minden Times*, credits the Dollos with keeping the papers afloat.

When Brezina took over ownership of the newspaper in 1979, the page count was thin and the ads were hard to come by. It was looking like the future of the papers were dim. " I'd like to give credit here to the Dollo family who owned and operated the IGA grocery store now the Foodland store," said Brezina. "They had a full-page ad on the back page when I bought the paper, and it was there when I sold it 22 years later."

Brezina noted that the Dollos commitment to the small-town publication was heartwarming in a time of uncertainty. "It provided an incentive for other businesses to advertise in the publication, knowing that people would be picking it up to scan the grocery specials for that week," he said, "and quite frankly, it was a feather in our caps to have a weekly ad of that size in our newspaper even when it was just 12 or eight pages."

Now in its third generation of Dollo management, with the fourth generation waiting in the wings, current managers Jaime Dollo and his sister, Kelli MacNaull, are leading the charge to carry on the family history that their parents, David and Diane, have created. "I never really stepped away," laughed Kelli, noting that even while she explored other career options, she always returned to her roots.

"We have to continue to keep this business going that grandpa and dad carved out," added Jaime. "Hopefully we can carry on what they started."

To honour the 70 years of growth and community presence, the Dollo family will be hosting a reunion on June 13 at the Minden Community Centre. Running from 5 to 11 p.m., the evening will include food, drinks, music and dancing. All those who have worked at Dollo's over the years are welcome to attend. "We want to celebrate all that they've done over the years," said John Davis. "It's worth celebrating."

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Artificial

Editorial

Emily Stonehouse

I'VE ALWAYS found the term 'Artificial Intelligence' (AI) to be a bit of an oxymoron.

It's right up there with 'jumbo shrimp' or 'old news'. The two words clashing and pulling against one another, similar to how AI is cloaking our world; an old versus new mentality.

This week in County council, Director of IT Mike March brought a report to the table, outlining the framework for how IT can be utilized and managed moving forward. Of course this is a living document; the realities of AI still bobbing under the surface of possibility.

But to me, intelligence isn't something that can be artificial. It's real, it's learned, it's practiced, it's raw. There are varying levels of intelligence; differing niches and specializations, but they all take a dedication and a hunger to learn more.

I see the benefit to AI. It's easy, it's accessible, it's everywhere. I've been trying to limit my judgement on those who use AI for posters around elections, advertising, or events. Suddenly everyone is a graphic designer, and that streamlines the process for many.

And truthfully, I still don't fully understand everything about AI. Because I am a human, it takes me extra time to learn, to track the patterns, to absorb information. AI doesn't need that extra time. All the content AI produces comes from already generated content. It pulls from algorithms, uploads, and available resources, and through machine learning, it allows programs to improve over time without being explicitly programmed.

The information is all filtered through a data storage centre, which is a large facility (often the size of multiple football fields) that runs the systems behind AI. When you ask a question, generate content, or receive a recommendation, that request is processed through the centre in a matter of seconds. The facilities are currently responsible for 1.5 per cent of global energy use, and that is expected to substantially increase as AI rolls into the world.

It's a little bit scary to think about. The more we feed these machines, the hungrier they get.

And like kids and dogs, the more they eat, the more they grow.

And while intelligence is far from artificial, maybe it's becoming a thing of the past anyway.

It's responsible for our local councils to bring the topic of AI to the table. With an election on the horizon, many mandates and elevator pitches can be made by typing in a few prompts to ChatGPT. But when those people are representing us, do we get artificial intelligence, or the real deal?

We can't escape AI. Its cloud of doom and gloom is constantly hovering above our heads. And efforts have been made to implement the tool in a number of sectors where it prioritizes people. It's been proven that the service can be ethically utilized and put into practice.

But will it ever completely wash out the very real intelligence of humans?

I like to think it won't. I spent this past week driving across the county. I visited a childcare centre in Gooderham, dedicated to breathing new life into the community. I spoke to the Dollo family about being in business for 70 years. I spent time with Sue King at Pine Reflections in Carnarvon, and instantly absorbed a bit of her whimsical outlook on life.

Our communities are rich with colour and chaos, grit and grace, intelligence and imagination. We've grown and evolved over the years, adapted and learned.

And there's absolutely nothing artificial about that.

In search of

Humans & Technology

Erin Kernohan-Berning

INTERNET SEARCH is something I think many of us take for granted. In the early days of the internet, humans manually indexed websites. This was possible in the early 1990s when the number of websites on the internet numbered in the thousands to tens of thousands. By the late 1990s as the internet grew, search engines that allowed users to search for any word on any webpage on the internet became the norm.

Modern search engines work by deploying programs called web crawlers. These programs "crawl" the internet, look at every webpage they encounter, all the text and media on that page, and index the information. The information is then retrieved when a user inputs a search term, with an algorithm determining in what order relevant results should appear.

Since the early 2000s, Google has been synonymous with internet search. You've probably said, "I Googled it," instead of, "I searched the internet for it," when talking about looking for content online. I have too, but I've barely used Google at all in the last six months.

While Google might have 90 per cent of the search engine market share, it's by far not the only search engine out there. Using Google as a search engine, for me, started to become an issue when I do research for this column. Google makes billions of dollars in ad revenue through its search engine. Ads include sponsored results and product results, where companies have paid into Google's ad program to have those results appear at the top of the search results right after the usually also unwanted AI snippet.

While sponsored results can be relevant to a search, they aren't always the best results. When researching a topic, I was often getting results focused not on learning about a particular thing, but more on how to buy a particular thing. When trying to research multiple perspectives on a topic, Google's personalized search results meant that I was working harder to make sure I wasn't searching in an echo chamber of mine and the algorithm's making.

I've since switched to an ad-free paid metasearch engine called Kagi, and the search experience is surprisingly different. A metasearch engine uses a number of other search engines, compiles those results, and then delivers those results based on its own ranking algorithm. Kagi then downranks websites with lots of trackers and advertising and promotes content from ad-free and personal websites. It also lets users pin, upgrade, and downgrade websites, so that your go-to websites appear higher up in your search results.

Kagi also has a number of other useful features. It warns me if a search result uses trackers on their site (which can be a privacy concern). It lets me narrow search results to specific websites (I can search Reddit, for instance, by adding a @r to my search). And it lets me block sites that I don't want to include in my search results. Kagi also has a SmallWeb feature in which its own webcrawler indexes small websites and blogs that may be overlooked by behemoths like Google.

Kagi does have an AI snippet feature, but I was able to easily turn it off in the settings. It also has an AI assistant, but unlike Google it doesn't bug you to try it every time you do a search. There is also their StopSlop feature that attempts to exclude AI generated content and images from search results.

I pay around $14/month Canadian for unlimited Kagi searches. Kagi doesn't have ads and doesn't monetize user data, so their revenue needs to come from subscriptions. Paying for something that has historically been free is a bit of a mental shift. However, when you consider the amount of revenue Google makes off me using their search engine, feeding me their ads which are served based on whatever data they can collect from me, it certainly doesn't seem so free anymore.

Not everyone wants or can afford to pay for a search engine. The good news is there are also ad-supported alternatives to Google. DuckDuckGo is one such alternative. While it does use ads for revenue, it doesn't collect or store your data. It also lets you narrow search results, block sites, toggle off AI features and exclude AI generated images. If you've never tried a search engine that isn't Google before, I'd recommend giving DuckDuckGo a try.

Internet search is indispensable online infrastructure, and it is essentially monopolized by a single company. However, it doesn't have to be that way. There are alternatives out there, and I've talked about two I'm familiar with. If you want to see what life without Google might be like, let your next Google search be, "alternative search engines to Google."

points of view

Song of my youth

Loon Tales

Steve Galea

WHEN YOU get to a certain age, you look back on your life and think of how you got to where you are now, which for most folks of my generation, had a lot to do with the person beside you who held the road map and said, "Oh crap, we should have taken that last off ramp!"

That's OK, because when you get older you recognize that everything happens for a reason. At the same time, you also can't help but think how your life could have been very different, if you had only taken a different road.

For example, I'm pretty sure I could have been a rock star – if not for that one darn song.

Permit me to explain.

The year was 1969, and I was in grade two – for the first time.

Mrs. Andrews, our music teacher, entered our class and introduced us to the latest hit that was making the rounds. It was a snazzy little number called, *Hot Cross Buns.*

Admittedly, after hearing it, no one who was awake in our class thought much of it. But some of us also realized that Mrs. Andrews was British and since we were still at the tail end of the British Invasion, we figured she knew something we didn't.

So, we did our best to learn the song, despite its lyrical complexities, knowing full well that mastering this was the first step in being the front man for a band with a cool animal name like the Monkees or the Beatles. (The cool part came from spelling them wrong.)

I can still remember those haunting lyrics.

Hot cross buns, hot cross buns,
One a penny, two a penny
Hot cross buns,
If you have no daughters, give them to your sons,
One a penny, two a penny
Hot cross buns

The lyrics spoke to kids of my generation, but the music could have clearly benefited from more cow bell. Mrs. Andrews quickly vetoed that, however, and then began to appraise our voices as we sang the song to her a cappella.

Long story short, it turned out that my singing voice was suited for other things – such as playing the triangle.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Andrews confiscated the triangle, almost immediately after I attached an old lamp cord to it in an effort to make it electric. She got to me right after I plugged it in, and did a six-minute solo, which, according to my friend Chuck, "was real good."

He particularly liked the part when the smoke emerged from my ears.

That was the last music class I was ever invited to attend.

As sad as it was, even at the age of seven, I knew that without Mrs. Andrews' approval, no big-time agents would take a chance on me. So I pivoted career paths towards super-heroing, which also didn't pan out due to the whole short legs and long capes thing. Which is to say, it got a little dicey when my mom asked if I knew anything about why there were shoeprints on her best white towel.

But it could have been much different. Luckily, by Grade 3, the teachers saw something in me, so they kept me in every recess, so I could write lines on the chalkboard.

Some 56 years later, here I am.

pic *of the* past

The William Barnum home at Pine Lake, West Guilford, photographed in 1923. This typical Haliburton County settler's home was constructed of logs. Rough, but cozy, many log homes were later clad with board siding, protecting the logs and reducing winter draughts. The house was torn down in 1974. At left of photo: Mr. and Mrs. William Barnum; Les McGuire; Elva Barnum and Herb Barnum are at the right. /FILE

Running with the fish

Our road Down

Sharon Lynch

EVERY YEAR about this time, Jane thought of the suckers. Not the people kind – the fish kind. Sometimes she'd remember the budding trees hanging heavy with spring rain, the air still cold as though nature forgot what the calendar said. Or maybe it would be surprisingly warm, swarming with black flies as she stood watching the men at work.

They were after the suckers. Each spring these large, ugly fish made their way downstream from one lake into the next. And when Jane heard 'the suckers are running' she knew she was in for a spectacle. As a city youngster it was something she could never imagine unless she saw it first hand. It was amazing and scary and foreign to anything else she witnessed back home in the suburbs.

A crowd of men, rough-looking guys in hip waders and armed with pitchforks, stood in the fast-moving river in front of her cottage. Every minute or two they'd plunge their weapon into the rapids and heave out a squirming fish pierced on the lethal tines. She marvelled at the sight with a combination of curiosity and horror. Then the prize would be tossed onto the smooth-rock shore where it squirmed about for a few minutes before dying.

They were ugly creatures these fish: slimy grey, with the large pursed mouth of a bottom-feeder. But despite their appearance Jane felt a little sad watching them suffer in the throes of death. And there were so many flipping about on the damp granite. She wondered where they all come from and why did she never see them when she fished in the rowboat or swam over at the beach.

The blackflies didn't seem to bother the men as they constantly scanned the river, shouting and heaving their catch quickly onto shore before resuming the hunt in the swirling water. With their frayed, peaked hats and worn overalls they were a ragged-looking bunch of hard working, no-nonsense guys. Jane's parents explained they were mostly part of an extended family that had been carrying out this spring ritual for decades. In the old days these sucker fishing forays were another source of protein along with venison and moose from the fall hunts. The suckers were preserved and stored in glass jars that lined shelves along with others of nature's bounty.

One day, one of the fishers showed up at Jane's cottage with a jar of suckers for her mother. It was in thanks for allowing the men to carry out this annual spring ritual. The man explained that her mom could use the fish much like canned salmon. While hesitant, she mixed it up with mayonnaise and salt and pepper and to Jane's surprise, it made a delicious sandwich.

But it was still hard for her to forget those ugly, gasping fish squirming on the river's shore, their bodies punctured by the deadly pitchforks. But then, she was a city girl after all.

Talking period poverty with CFUW

You may recognize the name Ursula Devolin as a native of Haliburton, an avid skier and the co-owner of TravelMavens, but what you might not know is her work as both a Haliburton Rotarian and an advocate for Period Poverty.

The Canadian Federation of University Women Haliburton is hosting a talk with Ursula on May 21 at 7 p.m. at Fleming College. Everyone is welcome to attend and hear about the work she and others including the Haliburton Rotary Club are doing to improve the health of young women in developing countries, specifically in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Ursula has travelled the world connecting with communities sharing her knowledge as an educator and learning about the desperate needs of young women in developing countries.

Join the CFUW on May 21 for what will be an interesting insight into the program to provide safe and hygienic menstrual kits and clean water for girls attending school in Zimbabwe.

May 21 at 7 p.m. at Fleming College Haliburton

For more details go to our website: www.cfuwhh.ca

Submitted

HCSA AGM coming up on May 24

The Haliburton County Snowmobile Association is holding its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, May 24 at 9:30 a.m. at the Stanhope Firefighters Community Hall: 1095 North Shore Road, Algonquin Highlands. It's a recap of a great winter, we'll honour our volunteers, and share our plans for the coming season. Everyone is warmly welcomed. info@hcsa.ca

Submitted

Breaking news

Sir Sam's Ski/Ride broke ground on the new quad chairlift installation this past week. Shareholders of the community-owned ski resort were on hand for the photo, along with Dysart Deputy Mayor Walt McKechnie, County of Haliburton Manager of Tourism Angelica Ingram, and Sir Sam's General Manager Dave Bishop. Work will continues on the lifts over the summer months. /submitted

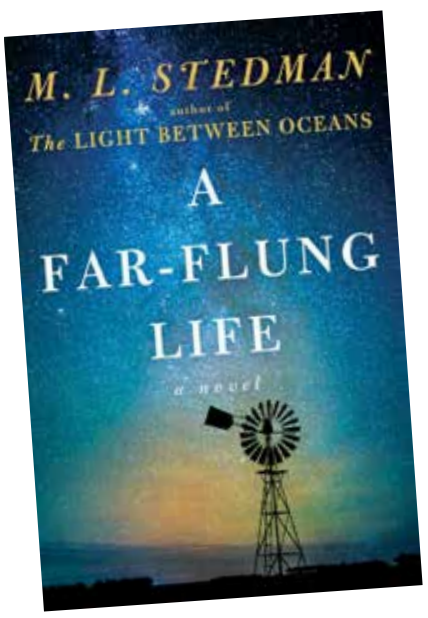
HALIWOOD NORTH

Minden Memories

A postcard depicting aerial view, waitresses in the Seven Seas room, and poolside frolics at the Hospitality Inn on South Lake. Caption on reverse: " Lodge and Cabins with superb meals in our modern dining room overlooking the lake. All activities handled by our competent sports' directors. Heated swimming pool to ensure all weather swimming." /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

HALIBURTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Book of the Week



Western Australia, 1958. A truck rumbles along a lonely outback road. A moment's inattention, and in a few muddled seconds the lives of the MacBride family are shattered.

Instead of leaving them to heal, fate comes back for them in a twist of consequences that will cause one of them to lose their life, and another to sacrifice theirs for the sake of an innocent child.

Set in the expanse of a vast and flat landscape, where the weather is a capricious god and a million-acre sheep station is barely a dot on the map, *A Far-flung Life* explores the hearts of a handful of isolated souls and the secrets they shield in order to survive.

A Far-flung Life by M.L. Stedman is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library. Visit haliburtonlibrary.ca to place a hold or learn more.

Home and Cottage Show kicks off summer season

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

It's not summer until the Haliburton Home and Cottage show officially kicks off.

Now in its 47th year, the annual event draws thousands from across the county and beyond, featuring over 100 community vendors.

"It's become a very famous show," said Andy Glecoff, one of the organizers of the event. "The popularity of the show continues to grow."

Glecoff noted that with 170 booths and 133 exhibitors, the show sold out of space eight weeks in advance, and the organizer continues to field calls, requesting show space. "We have a very long waitlist," he said.

This year, over 50 new organizations applied to be in the show, including a mobile dental office, a hearing centre, and a tattoo shop. But while the organizers are eager to expand their offerings, they also remain grateful to their original participants. "We continue to get support from major vendors every year," said Glecoff. "They're the backbone of the show."

Glecoff shared that beyond businesses, the show also featured a number of not-for-profits, including Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation and Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association will be present to share their initiatives. "Those are so important to the community," said Glecoff.

The three-day show kicks off on Friday, May 29 from 3 to 8 p.m., and continues on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the final day on Sunday, May 31 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

While parking can sometimes be an issue, Glecoff noted that Baumgartner Realty and the Youth Hub have offered up their parking lots for the busy weekend. There will be free doggy daycare offered, as well as facepainting for all ages on Saturday and Sunday.

With a draw upon entry, visitors will be entered to win a number of prizes, including an original artwork from David Alexander Risk, a weekend getaway at a local lodge, or high-end camping chairs from Glecoff's.

"Our show is unlike any other show," said Glecoff. "It's over 150 volunteers taking over 180 shifts over the weekend." The show is run by the Haliburton Curling Club; an organization that is steadily growing, and eager to support others interested in joining. Proceeds from the Home and Cottage show either go back into running the community event, or into the Curling Club to subsidize costs for new participants. The club currently offers a number of programs, including youth curling and beginner sessions.

Information on the Haliburton Home and Cottage Show can be found through their website at www.haliburtonhomeandcottageshow.com. The show runs May 29 to 31 at the Haliburton Curling Club and A.J. LaRue Arena in Haliburton. "It's a great show," said Glecoff. "Everyone is always happy with the connections they're making."

Little Bloom Co. had their first season at the Home and Cottage Show in 2025. They joined over 100 other vendors for the three-day event last spring. /FILE

Compassionate Hearts
Community Cancer
Support Circle

Are you living with cancer?

Are you a caregiver for someone living with cancer?

Cancer touches many lives, and support makes such an important difference.

NEW CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Our first gatherings are:
Thursday, May 21 from 1-3 pm in person
Thursday, June 18 from 1-3 pm in person

At Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre
1150 Garden Gate Drive, Haliburton

Please register by calling or emailing:

Brooksong Retreat & Cancer Support Centre
705-754-2966 • nancy@brooksong.ca

OR

Haliburton Highlands Health Services
705-457-2941 Ext 2265 • amann@hhhs.ca

Brooksong
RETREAT & CANCER
SUPPORT CENTRE

HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS
HEALTH SERVICES

To market, to market

Local Farmers' markets have officially kicked off, with the Minden market runnings on Saturdays and the Haliburton Market set for Tuesdays. Despite rainy and cool weather, both markets had successful openings, with many coming out to support the vendors. Markets will be continuing until Thanksgiving. /photos by EMILY STONEHOUSE and TIM YANO staff

Ecologist Cara Steele with education program manager and wildlife biologist Irene Heaven in front of the Abbey Gardens Food Hub. /IVY KATZ staff

Naturally coloured heritage hen and duck eggs at Abbey Gardens.

Ecologist Cara Steele points out a native blue cohosh and talks about how to responsively forage leeks on the nature walk.

People enjoying the spring ephemeral plants at Abbey Gardens.

Spring changes at Abbey Gardens

IVY KATZ
Journalist

"To be unique is a wonderful thing because it brings diversity," said Irene Heaven, wildlife biologist and education program manager at Abbey Gardens, as we embarked upon a two hour walk with ecologist Cara Steele, and a group of people enjoying the Spring Wildflower and Wild Leek Walk with Farm-to-Table Lunch.

With Steele leading the walk, we explored spring ephemerals, also know as the first flowers to show their heads in spring. This included leeks, yellow trout lily, the medicinal blue cohosh, hobblebush, and Dutchman's breeches. Let me assure you, that before writing this article I did not sound like I knew about plants, because I didn't. From just a short period of time immersed in the environment with Steele and Heaven, I learned to identify the plants I see on my own nature walks and the importance of them.

Abbey Gardens is so much more than 300 acres of land. The dedication that went into building this place reverberates throughout. Open to the public, anyone can take a wander on the trails. However, the Abbey Gardens programming, and the passion of those who run and curate it is something to behold, and perhaps the best way to begin.

As we meander through the gardens, which help stock their food hub, Heaven shows me their heritage hens and Indian Runner ducks; the special Lavender Orpington chickens date back to the 1800s, naturally producing pastel coloured eggs. The eggs can be purchased by the public, but these heritage species play a larger role. They are a key element in the children's day camp programming offered at Abbey Gardens.

"I wanted to get kids hooked on nature because then they will take care of nature," says Heaven. That could be said to be a large part of the inspiration behind their day camp programs. The children enrolled are getting a sensory and experienced based education which is teaching them to not only be stewards, but to be in-touch with the natural world.

The children's programming is interactive. Children go on hikes, engage with horses, play in the Enchanted Forest, but the programming is actually in-depth. EcoQuest teaches children about succession in ecology and how ecosystem's rebuild by-way of ordered gardening and seed replacement over time. Children also learn about homesteading and pollinators. Tall Grass Explorers teaches children how a forest grows by directly interacting with the field. Fresh Air Tykes is for ages five to six and Outdoor Kids for ages seven to ten. Equine Empowerment, ages 11 to 14, is designed to help youth overcome unpleasant cyber-based realities with confidence and mindfulness. View the programs tab on Abbey Gardens' website for full-descriptions. It should be noted that for nearly the same cost as daycare or a sitter, a child can be enrolled in this healthy and active environment.

On the way out, we see the Ojibwe horses I have heard so much about. Sammy and Maple, or Wawasum and Akoozi, are siblings and spirit horses. There are less than 200 Ojibwe horses left in the world and they are thought to be the only existing breed developed by Indigenous People in Canada. The other star attraction is Flapjack, the super-cute mini Appaloosa horse. I also learn that wolves and beavers are keystone species, and how our ecology depends on them.

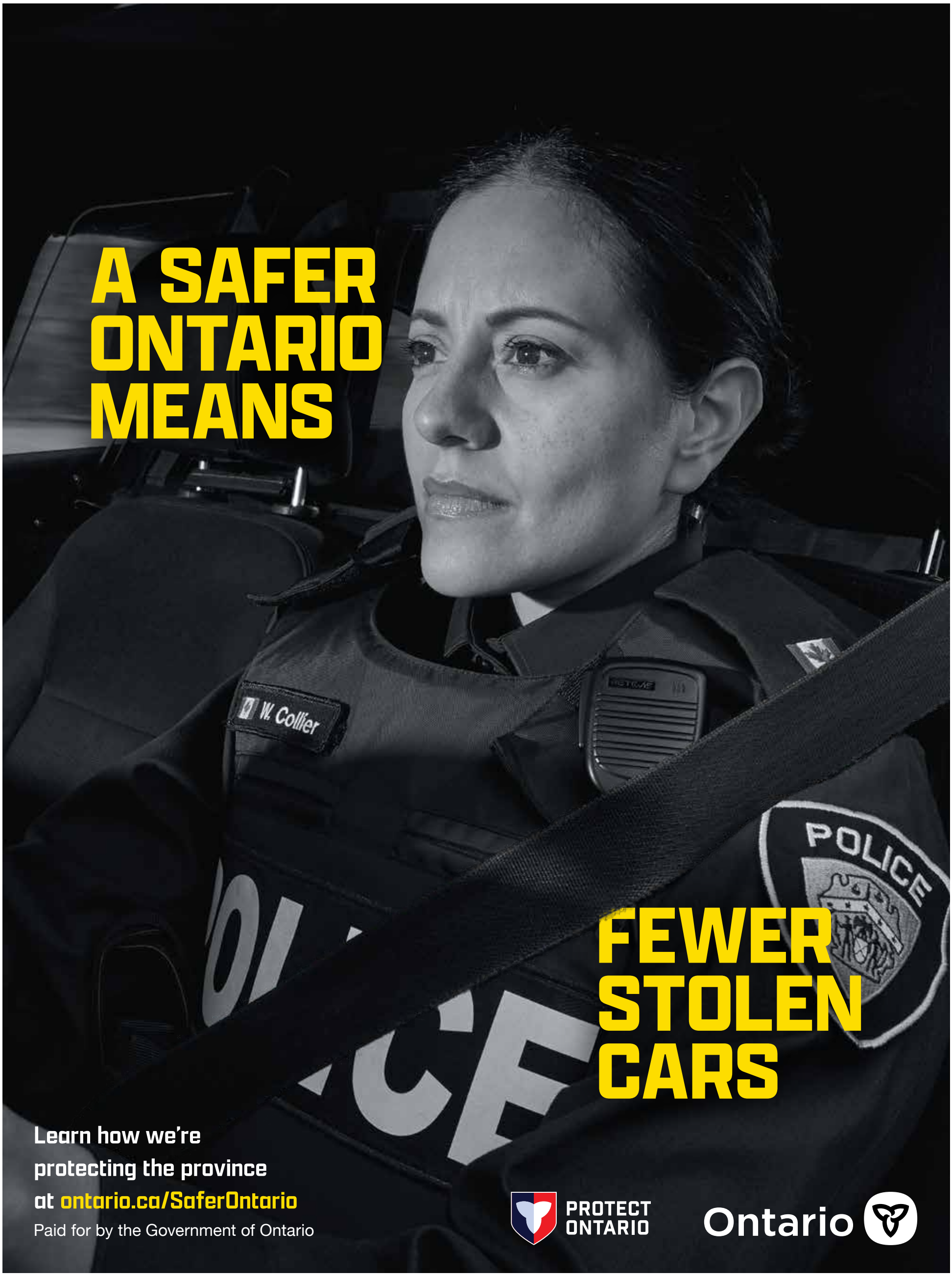
At the end of May, Abbey Gardens will be launching new, half-day immersive programming for adults, based on Nature and Wellness, shared executive director Angela Kruger. While she would not reveal more details of this sneak peak teaser, she went on to say that everything in their "new mission and new purpose" is informed by the mantra: "Gather, Grow, Connect." Keep an eye on their website to see the press release later this month.

In addition to collaborations with U-Links to help their research, Abbey Gardens is also the site for the At Last Forest School.

Their food hub is a social enterprise, stocked with homemade soups, pies, lasagna, pesto, and more, all foraged responsibly from their land. This year, they will also be collaborating with their gardener to bring more garden-to-table recipes onto their menu. Cheeses, organic meats, and preserves from local farms are also carried. The prices are comparable to the big box stores in town. The made-in-house potato and leek soup I had was top notch, perfectly balanced.

The excitement is palpable in the air and I sense that the announcements are well worth waiting for. From what I experienced today, the season ahead for Abbey Gardens is sure to grow. Drop into their Food Hub for a coffee or snack. View their camp options and register directly online. Email Irene@AbbeyGardens.ca with any questions.

It's worth the trek to Abbey Gardens, located just off Highway 118.


A SAFER ONTARIO MEANS
FEWER STOLEN CARS
W. Collier
POLICE
Learn how we're protecting the province at ontario.ca/SaferOntario
Paid for by the Government of Ontario
PROTECT ONTARIO
Ontario

Childcare centre aims to bring people together

from page 1

this project."

The location at 1023 Gooderham Street has sat vacant for nearly a decade. It was purchased by Scott Crichton in 2015, who still owns the building, but the right tenant hadn't come along until MacDuff approached earlier this year. "I think this is just great for the community," said Crichton during a recent phone interview. "She's putting something into the community that everyone wants and needs."

Crichton shared that when he purchased the building over ten years ago, it was a passion project for the community of Gooderham. "It was in bad, bad, bad shape," he said. "The easiest thing to do would have been to knock it down. But there was just too much heritage. So we rebuilt it, one wall at a time."

Crichton and his wife, Susan Browne, along with his business partner Chris Birker, dedicated their time, money, and energy into properly restoring the exterior of the building, honouring the original shape and format of the old general store. "We're very happy with it now," said Crichton, noting that the main floor is set for Highlands Childcare, and there are two restored apartments upstairs. "We also needed housing in the area," he said, "so we're happy to have that."

MacDuff is hopeful that Highlands Childcare will bring a new energy to the previously sleepy hamlet of Gooderham. "[We are] honoured to be part of bringing this space back to life," she said. "This is more than opening a childcare centre. It's about renewal. It's about community investment. It's about creating a space where families feel supported and children can learn, grow, and thrive right here at home."

Highlands Childcare is privately owned and operated, and is currently in the process of becoming fully licensed through the Ministry of Education. MacDuff noted that her priorities are to offer structured, high-quality early learning programming with registered early childhood educators leading the classroom. She also aims to create meaningful local employment opportunities in a safe, nurturing environment, rooted in community values.

A glimpse inside Highlands Childcare, housed in the former Barr's General Store in the heart of Gooderham. Amber MacDuff, the operator of the facility, opted to building in a small village for children to play within the centre. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

"This building has been lovingly restored with the hope of serving Gooderham again and soon it will be filled with the sounds of children, learning, and connection," said MacDuff. "It's about breathing life back into a space that was always meant to bring people together."

Fifteen years of flower power

Sue King, the owner and operator of Pine Reflections in Carnarvon, is celebrating 15 years in business. Pictured, King visits her Fairy Garden on-site. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

There's magic happening in Carnarvon.

Actually, it's been happening for the past 15 years, but it's not slowing down anytime soon.

The well-known Pine Reflections Gift and Garden Centre in the heart of the hamlet is celebrating 15 years this spring, with owner Sue King at the helm.

And King is the maker of magic. "If there is no magic in your world, you're missing something," she said, as she wandered around her shop; fairies flitting across the ceiling and whimsical colours dashing along the walls.

The Highway 35 location has become a destination over the years, with Gina and Nigel Atkinson as the original owners. King moved to the area in 2004, after spending 25 years in the Toronto hospitality industry. "I needed a lifestyle change," she said. "When my hands are dirty, my mind is still. This was really great healing for me. I really enjoyed it."

King came to the shop as an employee, but quickly, her passion for plants came to the surface. "I was like a sponge," she said. "I soaked it all in. I just fell in love."

When it came time for the Atkinsons to retire, King was the first to be offered the shop. "When I was 17, I had a dream of opening a flower shop," she recalled, noting that she believes in putting dreams out into the universe, knowing that in some form, they will work out.

With passion powering her way forward, King jumped into ownership of the community hub, and quickly forged ahead. In 2013, she doubled the size of the gift shop, and continues to add items that bring her joy. With crystals, books, jewellery, trinkets, and whimsical decor, the shop is a destination unto itself. "It's a place for mindfulness," she said, arms waving to the stocked shelves of goodies and treasures. "I have some people come in, just to spend some time here, and they tell me they just love the vibe here."

While the interview ticked on, more and more cars rolled in, filling their trunks with plants and herbs for the upcoming gardening season. With each new customer, the staff at Pine Reflections were present, helpful, and knowledgeable. The centre quickly bubbled to become a reunion, as opposed to a drop-in shop; the energy high, the enthusiasm palpable.

> ***"If there is no magic in your world, you're missing something ..."***
>
> — Sue King, Pine Reflections Gift and Garden Centre

"I love it," said King. "We've had loyal customers forever and ever."

When asked about mixing business and pleasure; her whole world revolving around the seasonal shop, King just shook her head. "I'm so proud of it now," she said. "It is so much more than a money thing. Life goes by too fast. We all need to lighten up."

While the shop markets that it is seasonal, Pine Reflections is open from the end of March to just after Christmas each year. But King shared that the varying seasons gives her an opportunity to explore all you can grow and show in the Haliburton Highlands, with flowers and herbs in the summer, autumnal foliage in the fall, and wreaths and baskets over the winter holidays.

Looking ahead, King is excited for what's next. While she is focusing on her own physical and mental health, she is also eager to continue to grow and shift with the needs of the community. "It's been 15 years of trial and error," she laughed, "but now I know what I am doing, and we all evolve."

King shared that one of her favourite quotes is attributed to poet Ralph Waldo Emerson, saying "the earth laughs in flowers." And King personifies that. With a destination that offers hope, peace, and just the right amount of flower power, Pine Reflections is equipped for the next 15 years in business. "This is a place that offers a great source of light and joy," said King. "I just love it here."

Transport Canada Transports Canada

Canadian Navigable Waters Act

The Municipality of Dysart et al
.... hereby gives notice that an
(Owner – Individual or company name)

application has been made to the Navigable Waters Registry, pursuant to the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act* for approval of the work described herein and its site and plans.

Pursuant to paragraph 10(1)(b) of the said Act,

The Municipality of Dysart et al
…….. has deposited with the Minister of Transport,
(Owner – Individual or company name)

on the on-line Common Project Search Registry (http://cps.canada.ca/) under the registry number 14931, a description of the following work, its site and plans:

- The project includes removal of existing truss bridge and partial removal of abutments;
- Construction of new abutments behind the existing;
- Launching of new modular bridge;
- Reconstruction of approach embankments, including some retaining structures;
- Installation of new code compliant barrier system and guide rail; and
- Site cleanup and restoration.

in, on, over, under, through or

across..... the Drag River .....
(name of the river, the lake or other navigable water)

at ……Head Lake Rotary Park in Haliburton……
(name of place where work is to be located)

in front of lot number ..... Lot 17, Concession 8, County of Haliburton .....
(or at the foot of such a street, etc.) (see note below)

Comments regarding the effect of this work on marine navigation can be sent through the Common Project Search site mentioned above under the Comment section (search by the above referenced number) or if you do not have access to the internet, by sending your comments directly to:

Director of Public Works
Municipality of Dysart et al
135 Maple Avenue PO Box 389, Haliburton Ontario, Canada K0M 1S0

Posted at……Haliburton, Ontario.....this …12..... day of ……May……, 20 …26…
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NOTE: The subject site (Head Lake Pedestrian Bridge) is located at 45°2'48.8"N 78°30'44.5"W (45.046897, -78.512351).

Canada

Kinmount Library audit; for the birds

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Pictured, top, a Belted Kingfisher swoops past the water. Below, an Eastern Phoebe and a Winter Wren call out. All birds pictured are regulars in the Haliburton Highlands. /photos by Ed Poropat

A Bird Friendly Certified City shows a commitment by a region that they are actively making decisions to protect bird populations.

With the Kawartha Lakes already being Bird Friendly, and more cities like Caledon receiving recent certification, the pressure is on for Haliburton County to become Bird Friendly.

To receive the Bird Friendly City status, there is a 55-page application process to ensure that areas mitigate threats to birds, protect and restore their habitats, and provide education around birds and their protection.

Fortunately, for a smaller, rural area like Haliburton County, Nature Canada offers a Bird Friendly Town certification.

The first step towards becoming a Bird Friendly Town is getting support from the county council.

"Our council was completely on-board," said Jamie Morris, member of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee. "It was an easy sell since no costs were involved."

From within the municipality, Morris says that their planning department was largely supportive of the initiative, and assisted with collecting necessary information from Public Works and other departments.

As a member of the Kawartha Lake's appointed Environmental Advisory Committee (KLEAC), Morris offered to assemble a team of the City of Kawartha Lakes' finest organizations and those with an interest in protecting birds. In March of 2023, the team held their first meeting, with members composed of representatives from Fleming College, Kawartha Conservation, Kawartha Land Trust, Kawartha Field Naturalists, KLEAC, and Kawartha Bird Control.

"It brought our various organizations together, created awareness of good work being done and where the gaps were," said Morris.

Some requirements throughout the process includes forming a Bird Team that provides annual reports, determining the surrounding Indigenous territories and encouraging the participation and perspectives of local Indigenous community members, formal support from council, celebrating Migratory Bird Day, implementing cat bylaws to prevent predation, and measures against pollution, pesticide use, and habitat disturbances.

The certification also allowed the group to receive grants for educating the public.

One effort that benefited from this funding was a campaign to educate people on how dangerous cats are to wild birds, killing an estimated 60 million birds per year in Canada alone. The effort, called Keep Cats Safe Pledge, involved those that committed to keeping their cats inside were entered into a draw to win a catio.

As part of their Bird Friendly commitment, Kawartha Lakes has recently had their Kinmount branch of the Kawartha Lakes Library audited for bird safety and support.

The company that conducted the audit is Kawartha Bird Control, owned by Norland resident Zack Steele.

During Steele's investigation, Black-capped chickadees, dark-eyed juncos, and mourning doves were observed in the immediate area.

The report recommended the installation of collision deterrent dots, an alternate overnight lighting schedule and enhancing the existing flower beds with native flora that are beneficial to birds and pollinators.

"Having a reflective surface often mirrors back non-existent habitat," writes Steele's report. "When outdoor habitat can be viewed through one window and out another, these are known as flythrough conditions."

The only solution to prevent these fatal collisions is through deterrent markers on the exterior of all windows. The leading company producing this is Feather Friendly, which sells the markings in the form of rolls of tape that can be affixed to windows. Appearing as small dots on your window, they are not obstructive.

The Kinmount branch of the Kawartha Lakes Library has 38 windows that should receive treatment. In the report, Steele recommends "treating the entire building at once given the adjacence to the Burnt River and nearby forested habitats."

In addition to the preventive markings, Steele recommended including education infographics where people can learn about the anti-collision stickers.

The overnight lighting interrupts nocturnally migrating birds through light pollution. With large areas of light causing disorientation, birds are drawn towards buildings, windows, and other hazards. The report recommended motion sensors in lieu of a lighting schedule, reducing energy costs and expenditure.

"As with any green spaces, building adjacent garden spaces presents an opportunity for positive overlap between people and nature," writes the report.

Steele says that their garden is a valuable resource to provide food and habitat opportunities for both birds and pollinators like bees and butterflies. An emphasis on fruit, seed, and nut bearing trees and shrubs as well as vines and hedgerows to increase available habitat area would greatly benefit biodiversity around the library.

Some native plant species offered included highbush cranberry, bee balm, nannyberry, ostrich fern, and wild strawberry.

Kawartha Bird Control says that if Kawarthas Lakes is interested, the installation could be completed in either the summer or fall of this year. This initiative would continue the growth as a Bird Friendly City and provide the opportunity to encourage positive social outreach and publicly show the municipality's efforts in protecting bird species.

In total, the project is estimated to cost just shy of $5,000 for all windows receiving the collision deterrent.

Currently, Kawartha Lakes is looking at making seven more of their properties bird safe.

With more and more places becoming Bird Friendly, Morris says that there is the potential for Haliburton County to become Bird Friendly as well.

As a neighbour to the south that went through the Bird Friendly process, he says that the area would benefit greatly through sharing its resources and committing as an entire region towards the protection of bird species.

After becoming Bird Friendly Town, Haliburton County would be able to choose its very own official bird, just as Kawartha Lakes voted for the osprey in 2025.

"Every bird you see is unique," said Morris. "It is a great way to promote an interest in birds."

Samurai in the Closet visits Haliburton Legion

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Mandy Shintani is the creator of *Samurai in Our Closet,* a podcast surrounding her family's mysterious 450-year-old samurai sword. After the death of her father, she strove to preserve the untold stories of Japanese Canadians. /THOMAS SMITH staff

Everyone's got something hidden in their closet.

For Mandy Shintani growing up, this was both literal and metaphorical.

As a kid, her father had a sword that was only brought out on special, ceremonious occasions.

"Inside our home, we had a secret that my parents told us never to disclose," said Shintani.

The sword is, in fact, a 450 year old samurai sword.

"Looking back, that sword represented not only the silence around our family, but the history of the Japanese Canadians during the Second World War."

Growing up as a Japanese Canadian, Shintani was not taught the language or culture of Japan. Growing up in rural Ontario, there were few other Japanese Canadians that lived in her community.

"I think that really left us with a sense of disconnection, of loneliness, and we didn't have a sense of who we were, or our parents," she said. "There was a quiet shame of being a Canadian of Japanese heritage."

It was only when George, her father, passed away at 97 when she realized her goal of unlocking the mystery of the samurai sword.

On Thursday, May 13, as part of the Telling Our Stories Speaker Series, Shintani and her co-presenter Susan Yatabe visited the Haliburton Legion, to present on both her podcast and the experience of Japanese Canadians during WWII.

Shintani's talk began with legislation, sharing that Japanese Canadians were not allowed to vote until 1949. This rule also applied to Japanese Canadians that served during the First World War.

Shintani's father was *Nisei*, a second generation Japanese Canadian. Raised in Japantown of Vancouver, her father's dream was playing baseball for the Asahi Baseball team.

After the attack on Pearl Harbour, Canada invoked the 1914 War Measures Act, forcing all Japanese descended Canadians to be registered as aliens. Those that lived within 160 kilometres of the coast were forced to move to an internment camp. This comprised around 90 per cent of all Japanese Canadians.

For Shintani's family, they were forewarned, and moved to a farm in Elgin County, Ontario owned by Premier Mitchell Hepburn.

All boats, personal assets, houses, and property were confiscated from authorities.

They were reassured that the assets were returned when the war was over.

"The RCMP took the fathers and the older sons from their homes and forced them to work in remote war camps," said Shintani.

Those that opposed or were considered to be leaders in their community were taken to remote Prisoner of War camps in Northern Ontario. At these camps, men wore large targets on their backs, making them easier to be shot during an escape attempt.

According to her father, the separation of families was the cruellest part of the internment process.

"The rare times that I would ask my father what it was like living in the internment camp as a teenager, he said something to me that I thought was unbelievable," said Shintani. "He said, actually, it was fun."

Yet, it was a story he was afraid to speak of. For the mothers living in the internment camps, they worked hard in creating close communities for the sake of the kids. Creating schools, clubs, parades, and sports teams. Kids often did not realize they were forced to live in the camp.

Many young Japanese Canadian men took up the call to fight for Canada during this time, while not being able to vote.

Their reason was to stand up for their rights as a citizen. Once returned, no one could say that they were not Canadian.

"Many of these young men that enlisted not only faced opposition from within their own community, but within their own families," said Shintani.

Her father took up the call as a soldier, becoming a translator for the Canadian Intelligence Corps. The intention from the Canadian Government was for the men to become spies.

While George was still in training when WWII ended, he became an investigator in war crimes in Southeast Asia.

"He was investigating one of the most notorious war crimes committed by the Japanese army," said Shintani. "The construction of the Bridge over the River Kwai."

It was during this time that George received samurai swords. As Japanese doctors were sent back to Japan, their personal items were confiscated. George came into possession of one of these swords, cherishing it greatly.

While he investigated some of the worst war atrocities committed, George and the other Nisei soldiers remained optimistic, as they were assuredly going to return home as Canadians.

After WWII ended, the British Columbia government forced Japanese Canadians to either be deported to Japan, or move east of the Rockies.

While they had revitalized areas they were forced to live at, they were now forced to leave the province entirely.

"Their homes and belongings had been sold," said Shintani. "Used in fact, to finance their own internment."

Japanese Canadians were not allowed to move to British Columbia until 1949.

Shintani published her podcast *Samurai in Our Closet* in 2025. The podcast features interviews of her family members and other Nisei, collecting their histories before their generation is gone entirely.

Remaining with the Shintani family, the sword was donated to Nikkei National Museum. While it has been confirmed to be a genuine samurai sword, the original owner is yet to be determined.

Shintani also says that her visit to Haliburton was like reliving her childhood, having worked in the area as a chambermaid when she was 16 years old.

The other speaker for the event was Susan Yatabe.

When Yatabe began her presentation, she asked if there was anyone in the audience who was related to Japanese Canadians that were interned.

Over a dozen people raised their hands.

Yatabe's mother, Kazuko Shinobu, was forced to be interned in Kaslo, British Columbia during World War II.

In 2015, while she was looking through her basement, she found dozens of Valentine's cards and drawings made by kids. Soon after, she realized that these were created by the children her mother taught during the one year she worked as a teacher.

Dedicated to contacting the artists, Yatabe has connected with over half of her mother's former students. While some students had passed away, others had been deported to Japan.

Thirteen students and two former teachers have shared their families' stories and photographs that are now alongside their own drawings. Some are still unwilling to share their loved ones' experiences.

Unlike many others, Shinobu spoke at length about her experience of living in an internment camp.

For the audience, Yatabe and Shintani's talk spoke of inspiration and the desire for Japanese Canadians to continue sharing their own stories.

They hope for the history of Japanese Canadians to never be forgotten and similar atrocities are not repeated.

The Telling Our Stories Speaker Series has an upcoming talk titled *Life Inside a Cult of Obedience* at the Fish Hatchery in Haliburton. Tickets and information can be found at tellingourstories.company.site.

ATAC a PROUD recipient of seniors grant

Aging Together As Community (ATAC) is a non-profit organization committed to working with community members on identifying and addressing issues that affect and/or support healthy aging in Haliburton County. Our aim is to empower the residents of Haliburton County to build a strong, vibrant community. Challenges and opportunities are identified and addressed through information sharing, hosting educational events, community consultation and collaboration with young and older residents, as well as community partners.

Independence and social engagement is a key desire of most older adults. Our New Horizons for Seniors Grant will enable us to offer four inspirational events, Connecting Community Through: Music, Artistic Expression, Storytelling and Movement. These events will bring together those who crave new and creative options to participate in. Each event has its unique benefits to promote health and well-being such as: music or sound as medicine, creativity, sensory stimulation, coordination, personal insight and building a sense of community. Sticks and Stones Productions will capture the interactive experiences of participants and facilitators at each event and produce a final video, to be viewed at our Connecting Community Celebration. More details to come!

Please join us to celebrate our new funding at, *We've Got Rhythm BBQ*

Sunday, June 14, 12 to 3 p.m. at the West Guilford Recreation Centre (inside if it rains)

This is a free event! Enjoy a delicious barbecue catered by Boshkung Smokehouse at noon.

Hot dogs, store-made burgers and sausages, salads, dessert. Veggie option available!

There will be lots of fun for the whole family including: children's activities, face painting by Pockets the Clown, musical crafts, entertainment by Gary Baumgartner and Mixed Bag (Dave Bathe and George Porter) a Soundspace Ceremony by Marci Mandel and Biljana Webb and Bollywood dancing by 'Yasmin'.

Please bring lawn chairs! Transportation may be available!

Volunteers greatly appreciated/needed for setup and teardown and helping with children's activities or wherever needed!

Register by Monday, June 8 to reserve your spot.

To volunteer or register in person please email agingtogerherhc@gmail.com Or call Greg, 705-879-9412.

Submitted

Pictured, Snowflake Meadows founder Kristyn Begbie supports a fresh puppy. Begbie is committed to helping all animals in need across the county, but is looking for community support to finance a kennel to support the critters. /submitted

One happy dog at Snowflake Meadows, a not-for-profit that boards, rescues, and re-homes animals in need. Below, a fresh puppy, supported by Snowflake Meadows founder, Kristyn Begbie.

Snowflake Meadows annual fundraiser returns

IVY KATZ

Journalist

Founding owner Kristyn Begbie will have 40 vendors at this year's Snowflake Meadows Magical Festival. The annual fundraiser is in its third year, and will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, June 6. .

This event is an opportunity to give children a fun-filled day while supporting a worthy cause. Snowflake Meadows is the only rescue for dogs in the county, and Begbie has ended up rescuing just about everything since founding in 2018 and achieving not-for-profit status in 2021.

She has been dog-walking and getting dogs spayed and neutered since her school-yard days, eventually turning it into a full-fledged business that is busier than ever. Begbie deals one-on-one with owner-surrenders, rehabilitation for dogs, healing animals from neglect and abuse, spays and neutering, parasite prevention, vaccination, and then supports their journey towards adoption, with much care taken in finding the dogs a suitable foster home. The health and happiness of their dogs beams from the pictures, and they have a 4.9 Google Star rating, which speaks to the work Begbie and her team do.

But the need is continuing to increase. With surrenders not slowing down anytime soon, Begbie has been adamantly fundraising to build a kennel in an effort to accommodate all animals in need.

This is where the annual fundraiser comes into play. In addition to the vendors, the event will be catered by Mulligan's, who normally operate out of the golf course in Minden, and Till Death BBQ. Pockets the Clown will be face-painting. There will be a petting zoo featuring puppies, pigs, goats, ponies, alpacas, and peacocks for people to see; a kids play zone with a bouncy castle and games; puppet play time which will operate out of the barn; Mortimer the Tortoise will be out of his enclosure; a paint the bus event where kids can paint the side of a school bus; the lure course for anyone who brings their dog, and pony rides by donation. There will also be a silent auction, which currently has over 40 amazing home and garden and pet items and a 50/50 Give and Get draw.

The event will be held at 1089 Ritchie Falls Road in Minden on Saturday, June 6.

For a full list of what to expect for the community fundraiser, follow Snowflake Meadows on their socials or visit snowflakemeadows.com. Admission is by donation, and all are welcome to attend.

Come for the dancing, stay for the vibes

Dance party coming to town for local women

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

Calling all women! If you're looking for a night out on the town, the Wildwoods Women dance party may be just the thing for you.

"No men, no pressure, no performance. Just women rising together under dim lights and deep beats," said Nancy Brownsberger, one of the organizers of the event. "Come as you are, leave glowing."

Brownsberger, alongside co-organizer Melissa Tong, have spent the past few weeks organizing the details of the June 6 event, which will be held at the Pinestone Resort in Haliburton.

And while the duo are responsible for bringing the idea to life locally, they noted that this idea is a part of something much larger. "We cannot take credit for this idea," said Brownsberger. "It is a movement that is occurring around Ontario in larger centres. It occurs over brunch, in cafes, in collective spaces both at night, and in the daytime."

Brownsberger added that the purpose of the event is to go out dancing, without the expectations of going out late at night. "Home by midnight sounds about right to us," she laughed. "(We) have been witnessing this happen and talking with each other about how fun it would be to try to volunteer their time to create this kind of opportunity in Haliburton County."

As for the event itself, it is designed for women over the age of 30, with dancing starting at 8 p.m., and raffle opportunities from local, women-led organizations. The type of music will be focused on hits from the 80s, 90s, and early 2000s, with a mocktail signature drink available upon arrival, bar service open, and late-night snacks. The decor will be forest-inspired, with candlelight, earthy textures, and dance floor lighting.

"Inspired by forest energy, sisterhood, and reclaiming female power, this is not just a party, it is a celebration of movement, memory, and magic," said Brownsberger. "Our mission is to create a recurring gathering where women reclaim joy, embodiment, and community. To offer a safe, celebratory space where movement becomes ritual and music becomes medicine."

If the event is met with success, Brownsbergr and Tong hope that it will continue to grow and be offered locally. "Designed as a repeatable, multi-town gathering, the Wildwoods Women has the potential to grow into a regional movement," reads their press release for the upcoming event. "Future editions may include themed nights, seasonal rituals, guest DJs, and collaborations with local women-owned businesses."

Tickets for the June 6 event can be purchased: by emailing wwoodswomen@gmail.com or visiting www.TheWildwoodsWomen.eventbrite.ca.

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Look up, look way up!

Climbers of all ages have been enjoying the weekly offering of community climbs at Camp Medeba over the cooler months. On Sunday evenings, all are welcome to visit the West Guilford site, and learn the ropes of indoor climbing. Pictured, climbers who visited the site last Sunday evening. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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COMING EVENTS

Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents

Point in Time invites you to attend our
Annual Meeting
on Tuesday, June 16, 2026
at the Haliburton Legion
Socializing and light refreshments at 5:30pm
Meeting commences at 6:00pm
RSVP by calling 705-457-5345 x105

NOTICES

Notice to Creditors

GILBERT HOPCRAFT

Late of 1011 Cohosh Lane, Harcourt, ON, Canada K0L 1X0

In the matter of the Estate of Gilbert Hopcraft, late of 1011 Cohosh Lane, Harcourt, ON, Canada K0L 1X0, deceased on or about January 17, 2026.

All claims against the above estate must be sent to the undersigned on or before June 21, 2026. Thereafter, the representative will distribute the estate assets having regard only to the claims then filed.

CLAIMS DUE BY:
June 21, 2026

NAME OF PERSON/FIRM TO CONTACT:
Kenneth E. Bailey

CONTACT INFORMATION:
kkellett@haliburtonlawyer.com / 705-457-8023

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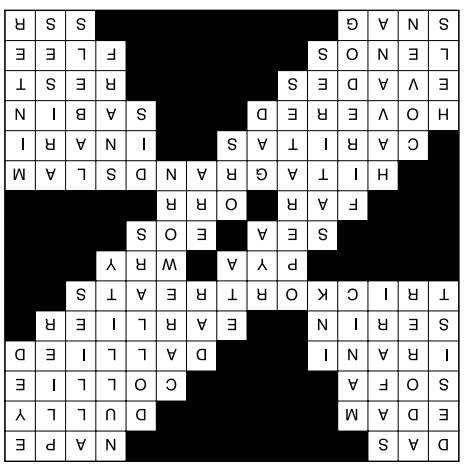

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OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Rosalie Joy MacLeod (nee Fowler)

Passed away peacefully at the Ross Memorial Hospital, Lindsay on Friday, May 8, 2026 at the age of 80.

Loving wife of Alex for 60 years. Dear mother of Danny, Rosanne, and Brittney (Jon) and great grandmother of Aubrey, Emerson and Wesley. Dear sister of George (Judy) and predeceased by Alton Lee, Robert Bruce, Betty Jean and Guy Leroy (Anna). Daughter of the late Ethel and Ulysses Fowler. Fondly remembered by the Precoor Family and by her nieces and nephews.

Friends are invited to visit the family at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0 on Saturday, May 23, 2026 from 11:00 am until the time of the Service to Celebrate Rosalie's Life at 12:00 o'clock noon. Reception in the Monk-Cray Family Centre at the Funeral Home to follow. Interment at Gelert Cemetery, Minden to follow.

Memorial Donations to Palliative Care at Ross Memorial Hospital or to the Charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family.

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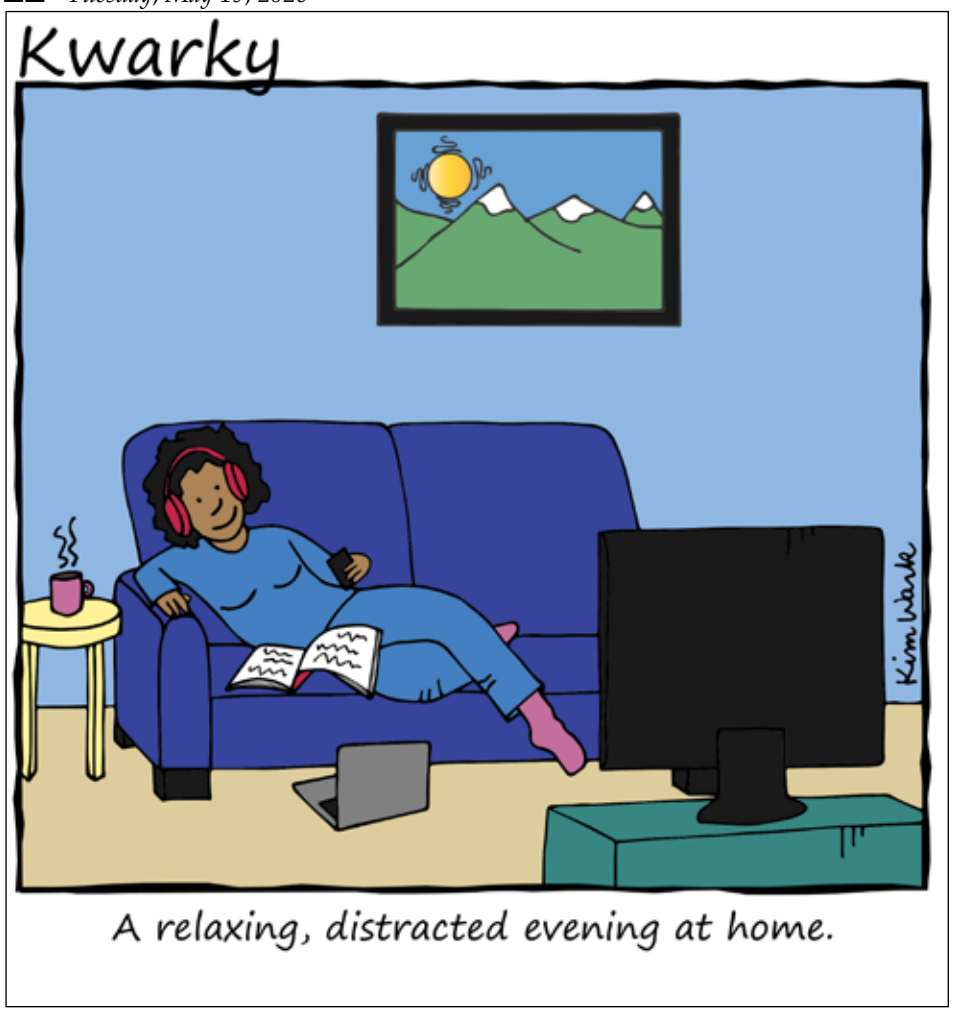
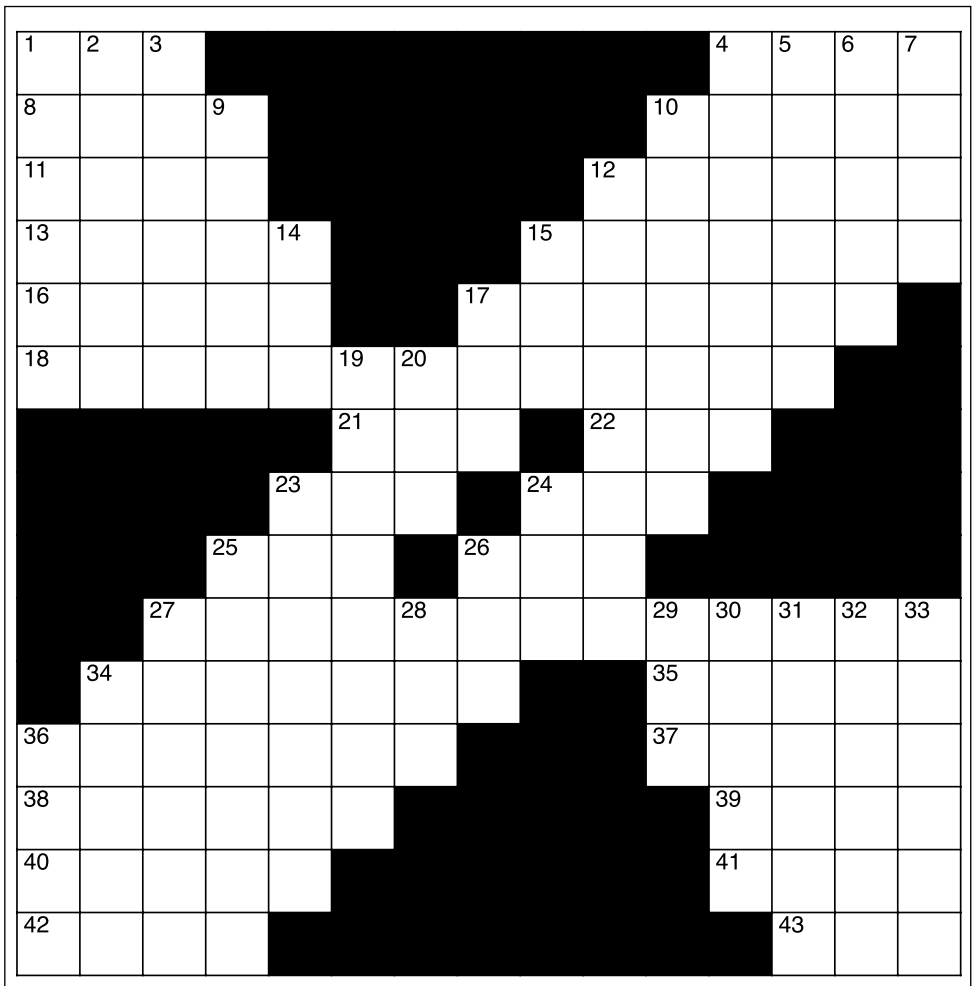
The Echo Haliburton County
The Times
Bancroft This Week



A relaxing, distracted evening at home.



CLUES ACROSS
1. Government lawyers
4. The back of a person's neck
8. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
10. In a less flashy way
11. Living room piece
12. Shepherd dog
13. A citizen of Iran
15. Moved slowly
16. Small finch
17. Previously
18. What a kid does on Halloween
21. Monetary unit
22. Using dry humor
23. Ocean
24. Greek goddess of the dawn
25. Not close
26. NHL legend Bobby
27. A ballplayer would love to do this
34. Charity
35. City in Finland
36. Loomed over
37. Vaccine developer
38. Avoids capture
39. We all need it
40. Openwork fabrics
41. Get away
42. Something you might hit
43. Soviet Socialist Republic

CLUES DOWN
1. Abstain from
2. Admirer
3. Expedition to observe animals
4. Act that is legally void
5. WW2 combatants
6. A tool
7. Looked at
9. Showing wild excitement
10. Banknotes
12. Tired
14. Printers need it
15. Women's patriotic group
17. When you anticipate getting somewhere
19. Functions
20. Breed of sheep
23. Mocking pieces
24. A major division of geological time
25. Andiron
26. Many not ands
27. Cuban city
28. He voiced "Olaf"
29. Criticize
30. "Thundercats" character
31. Markings
32. Gets up
33. MLB lefty reliever A.J.
34. An assembly of witches
36. High energy lasers (abbr.)

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SUDOKU

							6	2
				1	3			
			4	5	2			7
	8	5						
						6	3	
9	2				1		5	
2					5	1		
7				3		9		
		8		9				4

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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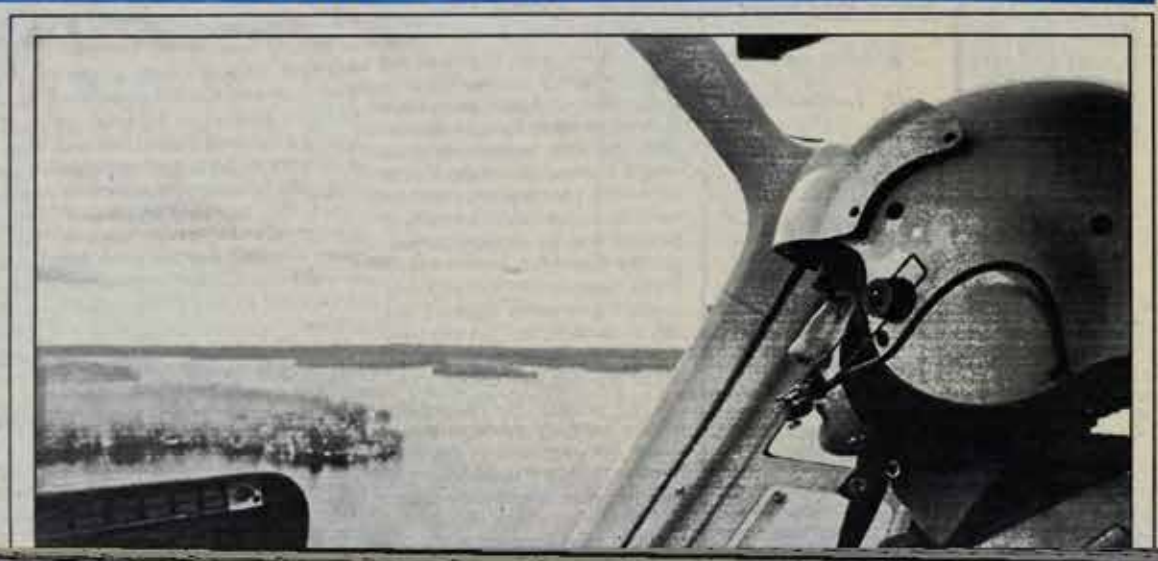
Bikers' camp:

Satan's Choice leases property on Soyers Lake

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

Residents on Soyers Lake who relish listening to the eerie call of loons had better get used to hearing a new sound this summer — the throaty rumble



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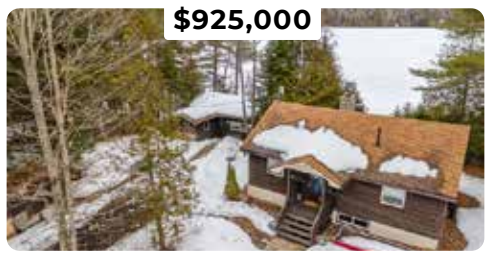
$999,900

BED 3 | BATH 2 | MLS #X12953212

GOODERHAM LAKE
$925,000

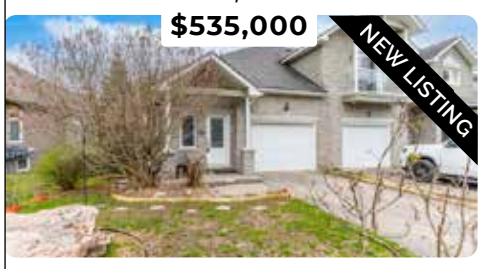


BED 3+2 | BATH 2 | MLS #X12954018

LONG LAKE, MINK RD
$749,900

BED 6 | BATH 1+1 | MLS #X13034386

WEBB CIRCLE, SILVER BEACH
$535,000 NEW LISTING



BED 2 | BATH 2 | MLS X13113762

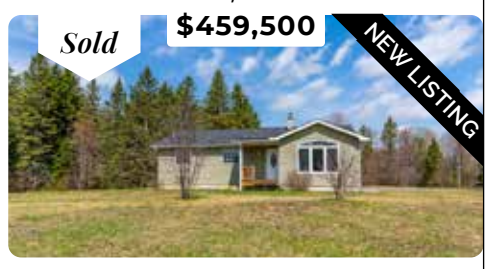
IRONDALE RIVER, IRONDALE RD
$499,900 NEW LISTING

BED 2 | BATH 2 | MLS #X13105380

KUSHOG LAKE, HIGHWAY 35
$499,900

BED 3 | BATH 2 | MLS #X12604142

OUTRAM RD, WILBERFORCE
Sold **$459,500** NEW LISTING

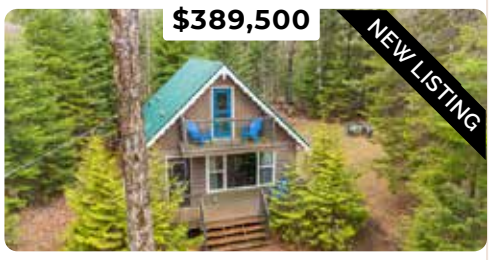


BED 2 | BATH 1 | MLS #X13111224

COUNTY RD 503, GOODERHAM
$430,000 NEW LISTING

BED 2 | BATH 1 | MLS: X13111224

GLAMOR LAKE RD
$389,500 NEW LISTING



BED 2 | BATH 1 | MLS #X13122288

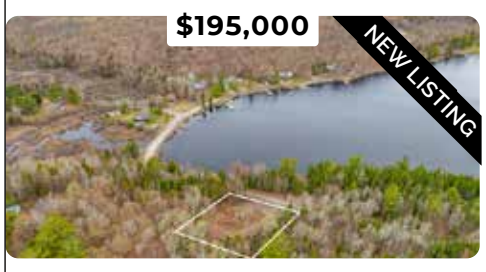
TOM BOLTON RD
$225,000 NEW LISTING

ACRES 6.48 | MLS #X13111900

BOUGHNER RD
$199,900

ACRES 5.31 | MLS #X13061996

BRADY LAKE RD
$195,000 NEW LISTING



ACRES 0.48 | MLS: X13129990

STILLS ROAD
$145,000 NEW LISTING

ACRES 1.21 | MLS #X13118448

EVERY SALE HAS A STORY

A big thank you goes to Linda Baumgartner and her team for their expert advice and service. Linda was a pleasure to work with and was professional and knowledgeable in handling the sale of our cottage. We can fully endorse Linda Baumgartner and her team for their integrity, honesty and commitment to our sale.
-S. Webb, Google Review

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